

Union Theological Seminary,
N.Y.

Three Addresses...
in Commemoration of the
Four Hundredth Anniversary
of the Reformation

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IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
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OF THE REFORMATION

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LUTHER AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Four hundred years ago today Martin Luther began public agitation for the reform of the Latin Church. On the eve of All Saints' Day, 1517, he tacked up on a church door in Wittenberg a long set of propositions on which he challenged all comers to debate. No one took up the challenge, so the debate never came off. It might have remained one of those fizzles of which academic history is full, had not pirating publishers seized on Luther's utterances and scattered them broadcast in different parts of Germany to the dismay of the prudent. They provoked a controversy which attracted great attention. Men usually like to watch a fight and many of Luther's fellow countrymen were particularly pleased to see the thick-set little professor of Wittenberg start single-handed to attack the Italian exploiters of the German Church; for most Germans, and particularly the leading merchants and bankers, had beheld with disapproval many a mule team heavily laden with silver going across the Alps to fill the bottomless coffers of the Pope.

The constant export of coin to Italy was a handicap to trade which the new Saxon silver mines, productive as they were, could not wholly counterbalance. This export was connected with transactions of a peculiar nature, suspected by keen-witted contemporaries, but fully exposed only in recent years.¹ The proceeds of the sale of the indulgences which called forth Luther's criticism were supposed² to go *entirely* for the construction of what is still the largest and the most expensive church in the world, St. Peter's in Rome; but actually, by a secret agreement,³ half of the net proceeds were to be paid to a Hohenzollern prince, Albrecht, Archbishop of Brandenburg-Mainz. Prior to this deduction, the South German banking house whose agents marketed the issue charged great sums for expenses.

Here in America we have just triumphantly completed the Second Liberty Loan, handsomely oversubscribed. Last Saturday night our banks and trust companies, working overtime,

Notes 1 to 5 will be found on page 27.

finished one of the greatest financial transactions of history. For this labor they did not receive any commissions whatever. When the subscriptions have been paid in full, every penny raised will stand to the credit of the Treasury of the United States. Contrast this clean transaction with the secret papal diplomacy of four hundred years ago, which paid the heavy selling expenses of the bankers,⁴ and then, for diplomatic reasons, gave half the net proceeds to a Hohenzollern cardinal, so that out of every three ducats raised scarcely more than one actually helped build St. Peter's.

Luther did not know about this "ducat diplomacy" or his protest at the indulgences hawked by Tetzels might not have taken the form of ninety-five dull and cautious theses.⁵

The dramatic story of Luther's conflict with Rome is so familiar as to need but passing analysis. Starting with certain details in regard to indulgences, the issue quickly became one of authority. One of the Pope's right-hand men, Prierias, Master of the Sacred Palace and *ex-officio* hammer of heretics, commanded Luther to be silent; for indulgences had the Pope's approval, and whatever the Pope approved must be right. Luther received other hints to be careful what he said, but he declined to keep quiet about what he considered a great evil.

Attempts were made to force him into silence through gentle but continued pressure. He was a professor of theology in a university founded but fifteen years previously with papal authorization. It was, in fact, illegal to open a university anywhere without the Pope's consent. Could not the Pope then put sufficient pressure on the university authorities to secure Luther's dismissal? These authorities, however, were dominated by Frederick the Wise, the aged Elector of Saxony, perhaps the most widely respected of the German princes; and the Pope could not afford to offend him just then. This illustrious duke, though conservative by nature, felt that the boldest and most brilliant professor in his university should be protected. To the courage and sense of fair play which characterized this prince among laymen the world owes the possibility of the Protestant Reformation.

Luther was permitted free speech and freedom to print, and his controversy went steadily on. Though the issues ramified, the fundamental question, so far as Rome was concerned, was one of

authority. Must the Pope be believed and must he be scrupulously obeyed? Or was his power a usurpation based on misunderstanding of the Scriptures and developed through centuries of error?

At the outset Luther was disinclined to push a campaign against the Papacy. As late as 1520 he addressed Leo X as a righteous Daniel amid the ravening lions of the papal court. Here he assumes that not the Pope, but his ministers, are to blame for conditions—an assumption very like the axiom current in constitutional monarchies: "The king can do no wrong." But this expression on Luther's lips appears to be hollow politeness: he had suspected as early as 1518 and was quite convinced later that the Pope, who claimed to be the Vicar of Christ on earth, was really Antichrist, the vicar not of God but of the devil. This led him to bitter polemic which is just as offensive to many modern ears as are his utterances on demoniacal activity in general and on witchcraft in particular. His interpretation of the Antichrist passages in Daniel and in Thessalonians are not convincing to liberal Protestant scholars today; and if his attack on the Papacy had been merely exegetical, it would now be as antiquated as the cross-bow. Of far more interest are his historical theories of the rise of the Papacy. Here, at least, with all his partial insight and undeniable prejudice, he anticipated some, at least, of the results of modern scholarship. To him the Greek or Holy Orthodox Church, which in his time, as now, rejects the papal supremacy, is the star witness. If the Greeks reject the papal claims, the Evangelicals can reject them also with impunity; nay, they are bound to do so.

Luther is not content to reject the papal supremacy; he endeavors to account for its genesis. He realizes that the historical problem is a very complex one and that the Antichrist-and-devil solution could, at best, be only partial. The other causes which he discovers may be classified as indirect and direct. Among the indirect causes of the rise of the Papacy, Luther alleges the following: apostasy from God's word and from the preaching of the Word, justification by works and those controversies in the Church which had led to the rise of the episcopate and the calling of councils. Then he gives the direct reasons, which are either secular or supernatural. The supernatural reasons assigned by Luther are

the ordinance of God, or the divine anger, and especially the activity of the devil. The secular grounds are lying, the change of the Lord's Supper into the Mass, the rise of a priestly caste, the avarice of the inhabitants of Rome, the influence of flatterers, the good nature or the carelessness of princes, and the insolence, violent acts, and crafty legislation of the popes, who, when given an inch, have occasionally taken an ell.

On antiquated exegetical and on more permanently valid historical grounds Luther repudiated the primacy of Rome. This repudiation cut him and his followers off forever from the Roman Church and makes complete church unity in Western Europe quite unattainable. So long as the decrees of the Vatican Council of 1870 stand, with their insistence on papal sovereignty over the entire Church and on papal infallibility in all matters of faith and morals, reconciliation is impossible. The protest made by Luther has been merely emphasized by time; instead of the Evangelicals and the Roman Catholics drawing nearer together in point of doctrine they have drawn further apart. If the terrible religious wars of the seventeenth century showed Europe that religious earnestness easily degenerates into anti-social fanaticism, and that toleration is the only path of safety, the nineteenth and thus far the twentieth centuries have demonstrated that historical science moves many events and movements out of the sphere of controversy into that of comprehension. Sectarian bitterness is dying down and both Protestants and Roman Catholics, now happily comrades in arms on all fields of the Great War, may hope at its close to cooperate, each in their own way, in the common tasks which call upon all who lay claim to the Spirit of Christ.

Luther rejected the Papacy; did he thereby reject the Catholic Church? To this question the adherents of the Pope must answer yes, and we must answer no. In a chapel where the only creed ever used solemnly asserts, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints," we can not read Luther out of that Church.

Luther's conception of the Catholic Church, it must be admitted, is not that of Pusey or Newman. In fact, Luther felt that the term Catholic was ambiguous, so that in his version of the Apostles' Creed he made it read: "I believe in *one* holy *Christian* Church." He did not sacrifice the Catholic ideal of

unity but redefined it. For Luther the essential of unity is agreement as to the Word and the Sacraments; a true church is that in which the gospel is purely preached and the sacraments rightly administered. Neither the apostolic succession nor obedience to the decrees of ecumenical-councils is necessary; for the bishops in the Roman or High Anglican sense are not part of the constitution of the primitive church, where every presbyter was a bishop. The church is not an autocracy under the Pope, as Thomas Aquinas had believed; or an oligarchy of bishops, as Cyprian had taught: but a Christian democracy. Fundamental in the constitution of the Church is the priesthood of all believers: a great democratic notion. It has been worked out in practice not so much in the State Churches of Germany, subject as these are to the King of Prussia or to other territorial rulers, but here in the United States, where, under a friendly separation of Church and State, Luther's ideal of the Christian Church is developing in freedom and with power.

Luther preferred truth to the external or so-called Catholic unity of the visible Church. He believed that Christianity must be first of all and fundamentally loyal to the truth; and that by such fidelity alone does unity become possible. The Union Theological Seminary stands by Luther in this momentous decision. Like Luther, we put first and foremost, the truth.

LUTHER AND HENRY VIII

Luther and Henry VIII are two of the most striking figures in the early Reformation; and they died within the same twelve-month, both, each in his own way, having made the fatal breach with the Papacy. They were in very different ways typical of their age, strong men who destroyed an old order of things. Unlike in all worldly circumstances, the Augustinian friar, the son of a humble miner, and the magnificent monarch, who owed fully as much to his brilliant personality as he did to his great position, had much in common. Of all reformers, Luther was the most scholastic in education and intellect; nor was there ever a more orthodox sovereign than the king who tore England from the grip of the Papacy. Two men more conservative by nature never changed the course of history. Neither of them was by temperament an innovator; yet when each set upon the work of reform, no power on earth could stay them in their purpose. In both is displayed much of the coarseness of an age, singularly devoid of delicacy or sensitiveness; yet Henry and Luther alike possessed the power of attracting not only devotion, but personal attachment. Neither one nor the other was an extremist. They both saw how far they wished to go and resolved to go no further; and the enthusiasm of others was not able to carry them beyond the limits they had set themselves. Such, then, were the two leading men of their age who in 1521 appeared as irreconcilable foes, and twenty-six years later had earned the same reputation as the breakers of the power of the Roman See.

The three great manifestations of the Reformation in Western Europe had each its peculiar characteristic. Luther's was a revolt of an aristocracy against pope and emperor, Henry's that of a monarch, whilst Calvin's was essentially democratic. There was little doctrinal and no political sympathy between such men as Henry and Luther. Protestantism had no attraction for the king of England. He prided himself on being, through his grandmother, the head of the House of Lancaster, which had ever been faithful to the Church; Henry IV and V had practically extirpated Lollardy, and Henry VI was very near to canonization. His training, as well as his tradition, inclined him in the same

direction. It is said that, as a younger son, he had, till the death of his brother Arthur, been educated for the Church and throughout his life he was never without interest in theology nor neglectful of religious observances. Alike in Church and State, he was most careful to have a show of legality on his side. In his most cruel and arbitrary acts, Henry took great pains to have the support of his Parliament, nor did he ever cease to regard himself as a model of orthodoxy in belief. Unlike his daughter, Elizabeth, he had none of that hard scepticism which regarded religion as a valuable card in the game of politics. We may safely pronounce him to have had a conscience, perverted it may be, but still a conscience which led him to believe that he was acting for the best. As a ruler, he detested extremists; and here the analogy between him and Luther is complete. He had no more use for ultra-reformers like Latimer than Luther had for Karlstadt; and he had an equally strong belief in the rights of the civil ruler of a Christian state. The great difference between the two men was that Luther fought for a dogmatic principle, justification by faith only, and Henry for a political theory of the proper relation of Church and State.

Herein lies the difference between the course of the Henrician reforms in England and the Lutheran in Germany. Both were the work of great men, fighting to establish different principles. That England was never Lutheran is greatly due to the strong influence of the great Tudor sovereign.

It must now be our task to consider the course of the Reformation in England to 1547 and to show how Luther's movement abroad reacted upon it.

Recent events in this country have shown that the Anglo-Saxon race is singularly slow to wrath. The words of Hamlet's famous soliloquy in which he says, "A man will rather bear the ills he has than flee to others that he knows not of," is a revelation of the psychology of men of English birth. None have ever been more tolerant of abuses, till they have become intolerable, none have shrunk more from change till it has become inevitable; but when the critical moment arises, the abuses are relentlessly swept away and the necessary change made without regard to cost. To understand the English Reformation, let me ask you to recall a comparatively recent event, the revolt of the American

colonies and the setting up of the Republic of the United States—the most characteristically *English* event in the world's history. The long war of liberation was undertaken with reluctance, conducted at first with vacillation and divided counsels, and concluded with resolution, leaving behind a very bitter feeling against England. The ideas which inspired the Americans were derived from the French philosophers, and the eyes of all were turned to the French nation. No divided allegiance was permitted; and those who cherished loyal feelings for the old country had to seek a home elsewhere. What was the logical sequence of such events and sentiments? Surely one might have expected the destruction of every memory of England, a constitution permeated with ideals completely at variance with that of the mother land, a new order as different as possible from the old. Instead of which the structure of society was hardly changed, the common law of England remained that of the United States, the different states were consolidated by having their rights and customs respected in a wise spirit of compromise. The revolution was effected; and then, as far as was possible, the old order was resumed. Washington and his friends retained the ideas and even the prejudices of the country they had repudiated, property was safeguarded by the ancient methods, law was administered as of yore; and when their object was completely achieved the English of the New World resumed the life to which they had been accustomed. As in a family quarrel, the mutual hostility between Britain and the United States was due, not to misunderstanding one another, but to understanding one another too well. It was the same in the Civil War in England a century before. Cromwell destroyed an old order, Washington founded a new nation; but both hated innovation and as soon as possible returned to the old ideals of government. Such was the spirit of Henry's reformation in England.

The remarkable thing about the House of Tudor was that it was the only dynasty of Englishmen to rule England since the Conquest. From William I to Richard III, the kings felt that England was part of a continental realm. The Stuarts were Gallicised Scotchmen. The Hanoverians to the death of Victoria were Germans at heart. It was not by chance that Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, called himself Edward VII. It was a proclama-

tion to the world that he meant to rule as an Englishman. This was the source of the immense strength of the Tudors. The nation felt that, whatever their faults, the monarchs of their house were native sovereigns. Their birth was not strictly legitimate, their title was doubtful; but they had the entire sympathy of the mass of the people. And, to do them justice, they thoroughly understood their subjects, and, as a rule, anticipated their wishes. Henry VIII especially, after the fall of Wolsey, ruled as none of his predecessors had done as an absolute monarch, yet with the hearty support of Parliament, which sat almost constantly and endorsed his most arbitrary acts with approval. A Greek traveller in England, in his reign, noticed the absolute devotion of the people to their king.

The Church had been long loved and cherished by the English people. No nation had been less troubled by heresy. The inquisition was practically unknown, nor was it necessary. Wyclif, the morning star of the Reformation, had died unmolested at the high altar of his parish church. Lollardy had a comparatively short life and no Albigenian or Hussite war had marked its downfall. Till 1400 no heretic in England was legally punishable by the stake; and later, those who suffered were few and far between. The holocausts, which made the later middle ages in Europe so dreadful, were practically unknown. It is even possible that the decay of Lollardy was due rather to argument than to force. At any rate, the course of Church History in England at the close of the fifteenth and opening of the sixteenth century was singularly uneventful; and when the Reformation began on the continent, those Englishmen who attached themselves to it were noisy rather than numerous.

Even the Papacy was no serious trouble to the ordinary Englishman. Its power had been sternly limited by the law of the land. The scandals of Rome were far away, and it did not matter much to the ordinary man whether the pope was a free liver like Alexander Borgia, or whether he kept a too-worldly court like Leo X. He went to confession and to mass and his conscience was satisfied; nor did it trouble him if he heard that a friar in Germany had defied the pope. Probably the bishops were more galled by the papal yoke than anybody. It is, perhaps, not too much to say that the chief attitude towards the

Holy See in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century was one of indifference.

The real grievance against the Church was that it meddled in the affairs of life and made severe demands on the purses of the ordinary citizen. The Church controlled every department, its courts were vexatious, its dues heavy and constantly seemed to increase. Mortuaries, or composition for debts payable to the Church after a person's death, were a constant source of annoyance, the ecclesiastical courts were oppressive and tedious in their procedure; and nearly every sort of case could be brought into them. These and similar things made the laity impatient of the Church, but there does not seem to have been much serious bitterness. Assuredly, the breach of Henry with Rome evolved little enthusiasm, perhaps it was hardly popular. Certainly the divorce of Catherine was bitterly resented.

Thus it will be seen that the first phase of the Reformation in England was due to no great popular demand for change, that those who desired a radical reformation were a minority of discontented clergy supported by the merchants of the larger towns, and that the mass of the people were indifferent and even apathetic, wherever their private interests were unaffected. This tends to explain the way in which some violent changes were accepted, as well as the highly conservative character of much of Henry's policy towards the Church. When a rebellion arose, it was almost invariably provoked by innovations in the Church. We hear nothing of Protestant revolts and little of Protestant mobs. In tracing the effect of the Lutheran movement in England, it must be borne in mind that the Germans were not popular at this time. The policy of the Hanseatic league was, as far as possible, to secure a monopoly of trade in England which was naturally resented by the merchant class, who were most disposed to the new opinion. This fact is generally neglected, but it goes to explain some of the lack of enthusiasm for the German movement.

I shall now endeavor to trace the course of events in England during the critical years in which Henry VIII was breaking with the Papacy.

Before doing this, I shall make but a passing allusion to the course of the Reformation during the interval between the

appearance of Luther in 1517 and the rupture between Henry VIII and the Papacy. Not because I undervalue its importance—for it deserves exhaustive study—but because its real interest belongs, in my opinion, to a later period, when the Reformation in England was characterized less by its anti-papalism than by its hatred to the Mass. Men like Frith, Barnes, Bilney, and Tyndale were sowing the seed for a crop that had not come up in Henry's time; and the king regarded these doctrinal reformers with the bitterest hostility. So far, indeed, he and Luther were in agreement, in desiring little change in the religion to which people had long been accustomed, provided their respective objects were attained. Tyndale, it will be remembered, was burnt on the continent in 1536 at the instigation of Thomas Cromwell, Henry's unscrupulous minister, the very year in which the dissolution of the monasteries was in full progress.

Nor is it germane to my purpose to dwell on the personal contest between Henry and Luther, to enter into the disputed question of the actual authorship of the book which won the King of England the title of *Fidei Defensor* or to recall to you the language of abuse employed by the sturdy reformer in answering his royal opponent.

I would rather invite you to consider what was actually done towards reforming the Church in England in Luther's lifetime besides the severance of all connection with the Roman See. There was one point on which the king was adamant. He would suffer no change in the matter on which the reformers abroad were most interested, namely, the doctrine of the Mass. On this subject Henry never wavered, even when it was necessary to secure the support of the Protestant party at home or their assistance on the continent. In the two official documents on religion, the 'Institution of a Christen Man' or 'the Bishop's Book', the result of the reforming Convocation of 1536 and its revision known as the King's Book or 'Necessary Erudition' issued in the days of reaction in 1543, the Real Presence is strongly insisted upon; and great care is made to explain the administration of communion in one kind as agreeable to the tradition of the Universal Church. A perusal of the two books is convincing that in general Henry desired to maintain intact, the teaching to which he and his people had been accustomed, pro-

vided that the Papal supremacy was unhesitatingly rejected. Following a great school of mediæval theologians, his theory was that the secular power was divinely appointed to administer the affairs of God's people and that the clergy should be confined to their own province except when called upon to assist the monarch in his task of administration. But he had no sympathy with the superstitions of which he accused his enemies, the monks and friars. His religious ideal was a reasonable Catholicism with decent and orderly ceremonial, no unedifying rites, and above all, free from foreign interference. We must judge him by his religious aim rather than by his personal character.

It is an unprofitable but fascinating occupation to imagine what might have happened had Henry VIII lived to old age and if the English Reformation had been guided by his masterful will and tactful knowledge of his people. It may be that he would have based the Church on the old Catholic tradition, retained the Mass and abolished all trace of papal interference. As it was, he succeeded in annihilating the Pope's supremacy and in giving the Church an English Bible and licensing an English litany and also in securing uniformity by insisting on a single 'use'—that of Sarum—throughout the realm. The great revolution he caused by his ruthless suppression of the monasteries anticipated by centuries what was done by every progressive nation in Europe. My own opinion is that he would have ultimately sought reconciliation with the Roman See on terms far more stringent than those agreed upon in Mary's reign, secured by a *Praemunire* Act which would have made interference between him and his subjects impossible.

But his actions had prevented the continuance of his policy after his strong hand was removed. He had degraded the clergy so that the best men refused to enter their ranks. The coarse rapacity of the dissolution of the religious houses impoverished the education of the country: even such colleges as Eton and Winchester narrowly escaped spoliation. The bishops ceased to be more than puppets of the crown, the clergy sunk lower and lower in popular estimation. The Church was rapidly hastening towards the unspeakable degradation it reached under Elizabeth. The old religion withered under the blighting policy of Henry and fell a prey to the extreme reformers of Switzerland.

Mary completed its ruin by identifying the Mass with the three things an Englishman hated most: disloyalty to the country, the Inquisition, and Spain.

But the Henrician ideal of a church Catholic but anti-papal never died in the breasts of Englishmen. It has often slumbered but has always awakened. It burst into life under Laud only to be crushed in the Rebellion. It rose again in the Restoration, though it was well nigh stifled in the filthy atmosphere of the reign of Charles II. It revived once more during the Revolution and the days of Anne. Not even the lethargy of the régime of the Georges could quench the smouldering flame, which burst up in the Oxford Movement, and still burns both in England and America. But it is a high ideal and a desperate hope which only strong men can uphold. We see constantly men giving up the struggle in order to sink into mental apathy and deserved oblivion in the arms of Rome. Yet to understand Anglicanism, it must be taken into account that there is an unquenchable spirit of Catholicism continued with a determination never to submit to the dictation of the Roman See. This ought not to separate it from other Protestant bodies; for if it is true to this spirit, its discipline and its ceremonies are not Romanizing. The Roman clergy fully recognize this; and are more opposed to genuine Anglicanism than anything else. The real source of danger is that Anglican priests should regard Rome as the true Church, and themselves as her imitators as far as they dare. To unite with the Roman Church would mean for Anglicanism loss of honor and liberty and spiritual death. Her peculiar duty is to raise aloft the banner of true Catholicism and join with the reformed churches in warfare with the common enemy of vital Christianity. As Luther would have said, "She can none other."

LUTHER AND THE UNFINISHED REFORMATION

Martin Luther was an extraordinary man and his career was one of the most remarkable in history. Born of peasant stock, never holding public office, passing his entire active career as a mere preacher and professor of theology in a small and out-of-the-way town, he yet dominated half the western world and the whole of it is changed because he lived. His interests were almost exclusively religious. With political and economic and social affairs he concerned himself little, and yet the whole of Christendom, Catholic as well as Protestant, has been profoundly affected, politically, economically and socially, as well as religiously, by what he did.

I am to speak of Luther and the Unfinished Reformation, but first let me speak of some of his achievements, some of the things he did that have helped to make our modern world what it is.

First of all, he broke the control of the Roman Catholic Church in western and northern Europe. He did not himself leave the Church on account of intellectual difficulties—he was not a modern in his thinking, nor on account of the moral corruption within the old communion—morality was always secondary, not primary, with him. He went out wholly on religious grounds, because he found no room within the Papal Church for his gospel of salvation through trust in the forgiving love of God in Christ, a gospel that was the most precious and the most important thing in the world to him. Others were out of sympathy with the Church on other grounds; probably few shared his experience and felt his difficulty. For generations dissatisfaction had been growing. The old institution was criticized for all sorts of reasons: religious, moral, intellectual, political, and financial. Many were discontented with it, and would have been glad to leave it if they dared. But they knew no other way of salvation, and, though they might be indifferent or even hostile to the Roman Church, they preferred to remain on good terms with it, or at least to make their peace with it before they died, and to receive the last sacrament from the hands of its priesthood.

What Luther did was to convince a large multitude in western and northern Europe that salvation was possible outside the Roman Church and apart from its ministers and sacraments. This conviction did not drive men out of the church of their fathers, but it made it possible for them to go out if they wished on other grounds to do so. And when Luther himself turned his back upon the old communion, many gladly followed him and the great evangelical movement was fairly under way.

The significant fact in the situation is that this meant the growth of religious and intellectual liberty. Whether consciously or unconsciously, whether by intention or not, the Roman Catholic Church was the great foe of liberty. An absolute and infallible authority, competent to speak on every subject, scientific and political as well as moral and religious—it was impossible for human liberty to have free course under the rule of such an institution. Luther himself might be narrow and intolerant enough, and his work might result, as it did, in the setting up of new authorities even more oppressive than the old; but in the conflict of the sects, Protestant with Catholic, and Protestant with Protestant, in the clash of rival infallibilities, respect for all infallibility was undermined, and liberty, both religious and intellectual, made its gradual way throughout our modern world.

Another great achievement of Luther's was his reinterpretation of the Christian life. According to Catholic doctrine, the Christian life is the life of a candidate for salvation. Salvation itself is wholly future and is to be enjoyed only in another world beyond the grave. According to Luther, the Christian life is the life of a man already saved, and saved as truly as he will ever be. When in the monastery at Erfurt he escaped from his fear of the divine wrath by simply trusting the forgiving love of God in Christ, he interpreted his new peace as itself salvation and not simply the promise of salvation. In other words, he identified salvation with a state of mind, the state of mind of the man who trusts a loving father and has ceased to fear the wrath of an angry deity.

Freedom from religious fear, the fear of God's vengeance, might come equally well from atheism—the man who does not believe there is a god will not be troubled by fear of the divine wrath. And, historically, it is of great moment that Luther in

freeing men from religious fear did just what the loss of religious faith has done for many in modern times. But the important thing is that he released men from fear, not by the road of atheism but by the road of faith. He did not put irreligion in place of religion, but one form of religion in place of another; a religion of trust and confidence he substituted for a religion of fear and anxiety. Religion, he felt, had too long been prostituted to base ends. Made the means of winning favor with God, and placating the divine wrath, it had been degraded from its high estate, as friendship is degraded when it is exploited for one's personal advantage. Religion means, not rites and ceremonies and sacraments, but peace with God and confidence in his forgiving love; and the freedom from fear which it brings has this great advantage over the freedom born of unbelief that it means freedom, not simply from religious fear but from all fear of whatever kind. Nothing can do the Christian harm, for he is in God's hands and the world too is God's, and all things work together for good to them that trust him. As Luther says in his tract on "The Liberty of a Christian Man," one of the world's great religious classics, "Every Christian is by faith so exalted above all things that, in spiritual power, he is completely lord of all things, so that nothing whatever can do him any hurt; yea, all things are subject to him, and are compelled to be subservient to his salvation."

Thus lord over all things by faith, the Christian need give no farther thought to his own welfare and his own salvation, but can devote himself wholly to the good of others. Out of gratitude to a loving and gracious father, he cannot help striving to do that father's will, and that means he cannot help laboring for the welfare of his fellows, for "What is it to serve God and do his will?" Luther cries in one of his sermons, "It is nothing else than to show mercy to one's neighbor. For it is our neighbor needs our service; God in heaven needs it not."

What a liberating word was that! No longer bound to render God service by religious rite and ceremony and sacrament, the Christian is free to give himself undividedly to the good of his neighbor. Religion, as Luther knew it, was keeping Christians from their true service—the service of their fellowmen. Instead of an inspiration, it seemed to him a bondage. As he looked back upon his own life in the monastery he saw that it was his

fear of God and his eagerness to placate the divine wrath and win his own salvation that had kept him from doing what it was his business to do. And, as all great geniuses are in the habit of doing, he universalized his own experience and concluded that, if once freed from fear of the divine wrath through trust in the divine love, Christians would be quick to give themselves to the service of their fellows. Thus Christian liberty was not an end in itself—Luther had no interest in liberty as an end in itself—it was simply the setting men free for their true business in life. Not justification by faith is the central principle of the Protestant Reformation, as is commonly said, but freedom for human service. If “the Christian man is the most free lord of all and subject to no one,” he is also “the most dutiful servant of all and subject to everyone,” as Luther declares at the very beginning of his tract on Christian liberty.

And how thorough-going he was in his interpretation of the Christian life, as nothing else than labor for the good of others, is shown by the way he brought all the virtues—self-control, temperance, and the rest—into subservience to the one great end. Thus he says:

“Man does not live for himself alone in this mortal body, in order to work on its account, but also for all men on earth, nay he lives only for others and not for himself. For it is to this end that he brings his own body into subjection that he may be able to serve others more sincerely and more freely. It is the part of a Christian to take care of his own body for the very purpose that by its soundness and well-being he may be able to labor and to acquire and preserve property for the aid of those who are in want, that thus the stronger member may serve the weaker and we may be children of God, thoughtful and busy one for another, bearing one another’s burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ.”

Another achievement of Luther’s was his new estimate of human callings. This was the natural result of his reinterpretation of the Christian life. Hitherto the worth of an occupation had been measured by its bearing on the future; now it was measured by its bearing on the present. Not that occupation is highest and holiest which best promotes one’s personal salvation, but that wherein one can best serve one’s fellows and further

the common good. A new criterion was thus given by which to judge all forms of life and conduct.

"It is not necessary," Luther says, "that he who would serve God should undertake some special kind of an occupation as the monks have done. Let him remain in his calling and do what his master or his office and position require. That is to serve God truly." "It looks like a great thing when a monk renounces everything and goes into a cloister, carries on a life of asceticism, fasts, watches, prays, etc. On the other hand, it looks like a small thing when a maid cooks and cleans and does other house-work. But because God's command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service of God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns. For here there is no command of God. But there God's command is fulfilled, that one should honor father and mother and help in the care of the home."

This meant the downfall of monasticism within Protestantism (to say nothing of its transformation within Catholicism) and the consequent setting free of untold stores of talent and energy for the common work of the world. It meant also the recognition of mendicancy as a vice instead of a virtue, and of industry and thrift as Christian duties. The secular dethroned the religious from its place of supreme honor; clerical leadership gave way to lay leadership in the affairs of the world; and culture ceased to be predominantly theological.

Closely connected with Luther's re-interpretation of the Christian life and his revaluation of human callings was the new estimate he put upon the present world. According to orthodox Catholic tradition, this world is a place of probation for the world to come and has real value only in relation thereto. He who would share the glories of the future must eschew so far as possible the enjoyments of the present. This world at best is temporary and must be despised—at worst it is evil and must be abandoned.

According to Luther, on the other hand, the present world is the home of saved children of God and as such it has a worth and dignity of its own. It is good, for all created things are good and were made to be used. Many of the implications of this changed estimate of the world might be overlooked by Luther

himself, and for generations might be hidden from his followers, who were still largely Catholic in their attitude toward everything except the Pope and the Papal Church. But it meant, in effect, freedom for economic development, and religious sanction for the enormous industrial and commercial expansion of modern times. It meant also a charter of liberty for modern science. Luther himself cared little for science, and most of the Reformers and the churches of the Reformation looked askance at it and feared the results of scientific experiment and discovery. But, in spite of this, the new estimate of the present world, implicit when not explicit in the Reformation, made it legitimate even for religious men to be interested in the world, and to be interested in it no longer, as for centuries past, because the study of it contributed to religious ends, but because it had practical value for man's life, or satisfied his natural longing to know. Roger Bacon was obliged to apologize for his scientific studies and to show that they helped the soul to heaven. No scientist today, however religious he may be, is obliged to do anything of the kind. Our modern science, like our modern economic development, is the direct fruit, not of the Protestant Reformation, but of other forces older and younger than it; but the Reformation has done much to promote them both, in removing the inhibitions incident to the old religious estimate of the present world.

Thus, whether for better or for worse, our modern world has been profoundly affected by the work of Luther. Breaking the control of the Roman Church, reinterpreting the Christian life, and giving Protestant Christendom, and in no small degree Catholic Christendom as well, a new estimate of human callings and of the present world, he was one of those, in spite of all his obscurantism and mediaevalism, who did most to make the life of Europe and America what it is.

I have been speaking thus far of Luther's achievements, but my subject is Luther and the Unfinished Reformation, and I wish before I close to speak briefly of certain things that were left undone and that Protestantism needs now to do.

For one thing, human liberty, which the Reformation seemed most explicitly to promise, is still far from realization. When

the exigencies of the situation changed Luther from a radical to a conservative; when, face to face with a religious situation not unlike the political situation that exists today in Russia, he had recourse to the authority of Scripture and creed that his movement might not be destroyed by the excesses of evangelical enthusiasts, he started Protestantism upon a career of intolerant orthodoxy that has made the emancipation of the human spirit very difficult and very slow. And the religious and intellectual freedom some of us rejoice in is still wanting over large areas of Protestant Christendom.

But this is not the worst of the modern situation. For political liberty, the Reformation did still less than for religious and intellectual liberty. For the freedom of the nations, for the right to live their own lives and to develop in their own separate ways, the Reformation did much. The growth of nationalism had already begun before Luther appeared upon the scene, but in breaking the power of the Roman Church, in taking religious authority from an international institution and putting it into the hands of the civil rulers, and in looking to the princes to support his movement against the Pope, he vastly enhanced the power and independence of the nations. But whether this should mean freedom for the individual, or his entire repression by the State, depended upon circumstances. The Protestant Reformation is just as responsible for the autocracy of Germany as for the democracy of America, and no more so. It has been our habit in the past glibly to claim that when Luther gave men religious freedom he gave them political freedom as well; but the modern situation in Germany, where the individual has long been intellectually and religiously free in an unusual degree, has given us pause. We see that the one kind of freedom, while it may seem logically to imply the other, does not necessarily lead to it. Whether national liberty shall mean democracy or autocracy depends, not on a theory about the freedom of the Christian man, but upon the particular situation in which a nation finds itself. If favorably placed, if girdled by the sea, or separated by thousands of miles of ocean from the nearest great power, it may offer fertile ground for democracy to grow in; but, encompassed close about by nations whom it regards as possible enemies, it may think itself forced to seek protection in autocracy. Our President

has said we are fighting to make the world safe for democracy, and we all know that democracy cannot easily flourish in an unsafe world. Luther gave men religious freedom by releasing them from religious fear. If political freedom is to prevail, another reformation is needed to release them from national fear.

Similarly, in the economic realm. As I have already said, the Reformation opened the door for economic development on a large scale, but whether that shall mean economic freedom for the individual depends on circumstances. It was believed by the peasants of Germany that Luther's gospel promised them emancipation, and they set to work to compass an improvement in their lot, confidently expecting Luther's support. He did urge the princes to accede to their demands, but when some delayed and others refused, the peasants took up arms and attempted to conquer what they wished by force. And then, alarmed for the safety of his cause, fearing that civil war would ruin the evangelical movement and make it an easy prey to the Pope and the Catholic powers, Luther turned upon the peasants, denounced them in unmeasured terms, and called upon the princes to crush them without mercy. Thus the growth of economic freedom, which might have been expected to result from the Reformation, was checked and retarded by fear. Over and over again fear of class for class, or of competitor for competitor, has had a like effect; and we still stand in need of the reformer who shall do for economic liberty what Luther did for religious liberty.

Another unfinished task of the Reformation is to substitute some more worthy and equally compelling motive for the old motive of personal salvation. When Luther released men from the necessity of working for their own salvation, he thought he had set them free to labor for the good of others. But, instead, he set all too many free to devote themselves wholly to the amassing of wealth or the securing of creature comforts. It may be unlovely to see a man selfishly spending his life in trying to save his own soul; but it is far more unlovely to see him selfishly spending it in the pursuit of mere material goods. There is at least a measure of idealism in the former that is wholly lacking in the latter. And it may fairly be questioned whether our boasted Protestant civilization, with its tremendous economic progress and its blatant materialism, is after all so great an ad-

vance upon the civilization of the Middle Ages, with all its poverty and squalor and discomfort.

At any rate, having set men free from the old fear of divine wrath, Protestantism is bound to give them something better to take its place, that freedom may be not a curse, but a blessing to the world. It is our duty not to go on talking about liberty as if that were the whole of Protestantism, but to recognize that liberty has worth only as it is liberty for service. It is our duty to put service, not at the circumference of Protestant doctrine, but at the very center of it. Protestantism needs to work out something like a technique of social service—less mechanical, but as carefully thought over and labored over as the Catholic technique of personal salvation—that Christians may not be left with the mere vague desire to serve, and fall into the unwholesome habit of thinking the desire itself a virtue; but that they may be taught how to put their time and their talents and their occupations to the best Christian use.

And, finally, what Protestantism must do for the individual it must do also for the nation. In setting the nations free from Catholic control, and in substituting national for international religion, Luther opened the door wide for war. In the Middle Ages the Roman Church made for peace among the nations. To be sure, it sometimes fomented religious conflict by its enmity to heretics and infidels. But in condemning wars of aggression and spoliation, in establishing the truce of God, and in striving to moderate national passions and mediate national quarrels, it did much, on the whole, to hinder war. Having destroyed the old ecclesiastical control, Protestantism is bound to put something better in its place; having given the world national freedom, it is bound to give the world international brotherhood. The most patent and pressing unfinished task of the Reformation is the Christianizing of our international relationships. In the long run, Protestantism must stand or fall by this test: Is it able—or is it not able—to give to men and nations a principle of conduct which shall make the old ecclesiastical control unnecessary? Protestantism can finally justify itself before the bar of history, not by setting the world free merely, but by filling the world with the spirit, and not simply with the spirit, but with the practice of mutual sympathy and service, man for man, and nation for nation.

NOTES (above p. 5f.)

¹ Professor Aloys Schulte, while head of the Royal Prussian Historical Institute in Rome, was allowed free use of the records of the Vatican in preparing his epoch-making investigation of the operations of the South German bankers, the Fuggers, who were for a generation dominant in financing the Papacy. The two volumes are entitled *Die Fugger in Rom, 1495-1523. Mit Studien zur Geschichte des kirchlichen Finanzwesens jener Zeit* (Leipzig, 1904).

² See the bull of March 31, 1515 (Schulte II, p. 135).

³ Schulte II, pp. 108, 143f., 177f.; see also H. Schrörs, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, Jahrgang XXXI, Innsbruck, 1907, p. 287.

⁴ Archbishop Albrecht was very discontented with the high cost of marketing the indulgence through the Dominican Tetzl and other agents. It is asserted that Tetzl and his subordinates received over three hundred florins a month for their services (Schulte I, 150). The late Professor Brieger of Leipzig has pointed out that if Tetzl and his subordinates worked for only a twelvemonth at this rate, the cost of marketing would be at least 3,600 florins, whereas the net yield of this indulgence in the archdiocese of Magdeburg "*in diversis annis*" was apparently only 5,149 florins; and this sum had to be divided equally between the archbishop and the pope. (Theodor Brieger, *Die neuesten Ablass-Studien, Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol. cxvi, 1904, p. 421 note; see also H. Grisar, S. J., *Luther, Authorized translation by E. M. Lamond*, vol. i. London, 1913, p. 353.) Still more recent investigations show that in the case of the sale held in the church of St. Bartholomew in Frankfurt the gross proceeds up to the fourth of August, 1517, were in round figures 48 florins, indicating sales of 192 indulgences at one quarter of a florin apiece: but that all of the 48 florins was used up in fees and expenses except a little over three florins (F. Herrmann, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, vol vi, no. 4, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 362 and 372).

⁵ H. Boehmer, *Luther in the Light of Modern Research*, New York, 1916, pp. 130-134.

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